

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Original) Arrangement for the removable attachment of a stretching rod (22) on a movable slide (16) belonging to a machine (10) for stretch-blow moulding a preform for the manufacture of receptacles, of the type in which the slide (16) is mounted so as to slide relative to a support (12) along a substantially vertical axis (A1) above the opening of the preform, of the type in which the stretching rod (22) is attached to the slide (16) by means of an attachment device (20) comprising:

- a casing (24) that is attached to the slide (16), that is furnished with a top transverse partition (28) and a bottom transverse partition (30) axially delimiting an internal housing (34), each partition (28, 30) comprising an axial opening (36, 38) allowing an associated section of the stretching rod (22) to pass through,

- a bearing element (42) that comprises several circumferential portions (52, 54) radially clamped onto a section (56) of the stretching rod (22), that is designed to be inserted axially inside the housing (34) of the casing (24) while passing through the top axial opening

(36) of the casing (24), and that comprises a top transverse surface (44) designed to come to bear axially against a portion of the bottom inner face (46) of the top transverse partition (28) of the casing (24) during the stretching step, and a bottom transverse surface (48) designed to come to bear axially against a portion of the top inner face (50) of the bottom transverse partition (30) of the casing (24) in order to hold the rod (22) axially down in the casing (24),

so that the stretching rod (24) can be attached to the slide (16) by a mount of the bayonet type, the rod (22) being inserted axially, with the bearing element (42), in the casing (24), and the rod (22) being pivoted about its axis (A1), from an angular insertion position to an angular mounted position, to place a portion of the top transverse surface (44) of the bearing element (42) facing the associated inner face (46) of the casing (24),

characterized in that the top end section (62) of the bearing element (42) is formed by at least two radial lugs (64) of rounded profile, in transverse section, the top transverse bearing surface (44) being formed by the top transverse face of the lugs (64), and in that the transverse profile formed by the peripheral edge (65) of the top opening (36) of the casing (24) substantially matches the profile of the lugs (64).

2. (Currently Amended) Arrangement according to

claim 1 ~~the preceding claim~~, characterized in that the bearing element (42) comprises a bottom end cylindrical section (66) whose diameter is less than the maximum transverse dimension of the top section (62) and is greater than the diameter of the bottom axial opening (38) of the casing (24), so that the bottom transverse face (48) of the cylindrical section (66) comes to bear axially against the inner face (50) of the bottom transverse partition (30) of the casing (24).

3. (Currently Amended) Arrangement according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, characterized in that the top section (62) of the bearing element (42) comprises four similar radial lugs (64).

4. (Currently Amended) Arrangement according to claim 3 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, characterized in that the bearing element (42) is made in two parts (52, 54) that are substantially symmetrical relative to an axial plane.

5. (Currently Amended) Arrangement according to claim 4 ~~the preceding claim, taken in combination with Claim 3~~, characterized in that each part (52, 54) comprises two radial lugs (64).

6. (Currently Amended) Arrangement according to

Claim 4 [[or 5]], characterized in that the two parts (52, 54) are radially clamped against the associated section (56) of the stretching rod (22) by means of at least one clamping screw (58, 60) which extends in a direction substantially orthogonal to a diameter of the stretching rod (22).

7. (Currently Amended) Arrangement according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, characterized in that the radial lugs (64) are distributed angularly in an even manner.

8. (Currently Amended) Arrangement according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~, characterized in that a section (66) of the bearing element (42) comprises a radial orifice (68) for angular immobilization that is designed to receive, through a hole (70) made in a side wall (26) of the casing (24), a matching locking finger (72) in order to immobilize the bearing element (42) in its mounted position.

9. (New) Arrangement according to Claim 5, characterized in that the two parts (52, 54) are radially clamped against the associated section (56) of the stretching rod (22) by means of at least one clamping screw (58, 60) which extends in a direction substantially orthogonal to a diameter of the stretching rod (22).

10. (New) Arrangement according to claim 1, characterized in that the bearing element (42) is made in two parts (52, 54) that are substantially symmetrical relative to an axial plane.